

An inaugural essay

on Gastritis,

or

Inflammation

of

the Stomach.

A. L. Davis

admitted March 16. 1869

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Preface

In vain would the student of medicine, whose time and opportunity are necessarily very limited, search in quest of new and original matters, to compose a thesis; not only would it be an useless consumption of time, but a failure in the attempt. It is his province to learn and adopt those precepts, so far as it comports with his own judgment, supported by correct reasoning and undeniable facts, which have been the labours of centuries and the fruits of genius and of talents.

For an inaugural Essay, I have selected the subject of Gastritis.

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of Gastritis,

or

Inflammation of the Stomach.

Agreeable to nosologists, there are two species of this disease, the phlegmonous and erythematous; the first is seated in the mucous or peritoneal coat, and the latter in the villous and subjacent cellular texture.

The erythematous is distinguishable from the phlegmonous, by the less violent degree of pyrexia, pain, tension, burning heat in the epigastric region, and sometimes by its extending
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to the bronchia, fauces and occasionally
to the whole internal surface of the
mouth.

I shall first speak of phlegmon-
ous Gastritis. =====

Of the symptoms.

The first symptoms of this disease,
are violent burning pain in the stom-
ach and about the praecordia, great
soreness, irritability and frequent vom-
iting, great restlessness and thirst.

In the more advanced stage of the
disease, the symptoms are augmented
in violence, attended with very great
tension of the epigastric and umbili-
cal regions, great prostration of strength
the

It is a very common error to suppose that the
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the pulse is frequent, small, hard, corded and quick; and without the disease be arrested, or mitigated in its violence, the symptoms become still more aggravated and alarming, portending an immediate dissolution; as extreme exhaustion of strength, so much so, that the patient can not be raised in bed without fainting, the extremities and surface become cold, the eyes wild, countenance sunk and pulse feeble, hicough occurs and evolutions of black matter takes place, similar to the black vomit.

Besides these regular symptoms, this disease is sometimes attended with anomalies, arising from what are termed delusion sympathies; thus cases are related by the Professor of Phy-

(Physicks in this School, of severe pain in the toe, resembling that of podagra; an inflammation in the groin, attended with contractions of the muscles of the arms, and aversion to water and heat, and to light, which two last anomalies, are always attendant symptoms on carcinoma, and spontaneous hydrops pleuræ, the latter of which is always attended with a high degree of inflammation of the stomach). These cases are related by P. Physicks of pain in the pudenda of women, accompanying inflammation of that organ, in the galled form; and that the highest degree of pain, always denotes a fatal termination of the case.

Of



Of the Causes.

The causes are cold water drunk in large quantities, when the system is at a high temperature, overdistention of the stomach, from too large a quantity of indigestible food, too free an indulgence of spirituous liquors, acids of various kinds, as arsenic, oxymuriatic of mercury, &c. corrosive sublimate, the alkalis, mineral acids &c. &c. violent emetics, contusion or mechanical or chemical injuries of any kind, in short, it is subject to all the causes of inflammation, suppled exanthematous and gonels.

Besides arising from these causes, it is sometimes a symptomatic disease, arising



arising from inflammation of some of
its adjacent parts, as the liver, spleen,
intestines &c

Treatment.

The indication of cure, is to subdue
the inflammatory action existing in the
stomach; and in order to do this, the
most powerful and directly depleting
means are called into requisition, such
as Bleedings, cupping and leeching,

The disease being seated in a
delicate organ, the exercise of whose func-
tions, is essential and indispensable to
the sustenance of life; and consider-
ing the quick career of the disease, the
remedy



remedies should be prompt and appropriate.

In the commencement of the disease, regardless of the pulse, form and prostration of strength, which invariably attend this disease, as well as other kindred diseases of the whole alimentary canal, more or less, in the words of our worthy Professor of the Practice of Physick, "we must boldly apply the lancet and deplete copiously and freely, or all is lost".

In the very onset of the disease, in an adult of tolerably athletic constitution, it will be necessary to detract twenty or thirty ounces of blood, more or less according to circumstances, repeated as often as may be found necessary. In thus commencing and prosecuting the treatment, the inflammation



mature nature of the disease, will more
evidently develop itself, and the in-
dication will be more distinctly mark-
ed. Might it not be laid down as
a rule in the treatment of this disease,
respecting the use of the lancet, that,
as often as there is an evident reac-
tion, after its use, followed by a return
to or near its former febrile, or de-
pressed condition, indicated by a fre-
quent, hard and small pulse, so often
to resume its use, until ultimately
the pulse is restored to, or near its na-
tural state as far as possible, keeping steadily
in view the constitution of the patient,
and other circumstances, which regu-
late the use of this remedy?

After using the ^{lancet} to a very great ex-
tent, when all the advantages, which result
possibly,



possibly have occurred from this source a mode
of depletion, was attained, and when it was
uncertain as to the safety of its further pro-
secution, and the disease still unobscured,
advantage may be derived from topi-
cal depletion, by cups and leeches, ap-
plied immediately over the region of
the stomach, with as great extent
as practicable. But probably, leeches
in too liberal and tardy a mode of proce-
dure for the urgency of the case; thus
blister should be resorted to; and con-
sidering the great urgency of the case,
they should be large enough to extend
in the whole region of the stomach.
They will allay the irritation of that
organ, as direct the action or excitement
from it. At the same time, much re-
lief may be obtained by the co-operation
of fumigations, applied to the abdomen,
of



of hot water in bladders, or any other
mode of fomentation, that may be most
convenient.

During this time, the bowels should
be kept in a soluble condition, and owing
to the irritable condition of the stom-
ach, no medicine to effect this purpose,
can be administered. Clysters under such
circumstances are to be resorted to, and
they to be of the mildest kind, as oil
and molasses with warm water, and as
they would be beneficial, both as a
fomentation and aperient, they should
be copious and frequently administered.
By keeping up, or increasing the peristal-
tic motion of the intestines, the contents
of the stomach are excited downwards,
and it relieved of the irritable condi-
tion by their presence.

As soon as the stomach becomes
relaxed



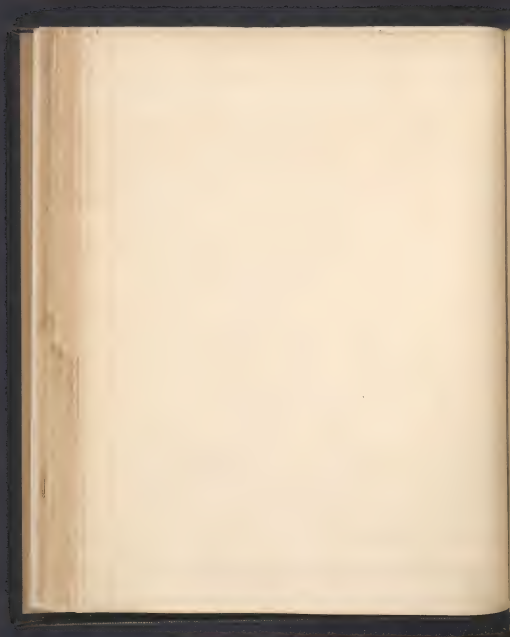
sufficiently calmed, or the circulation al-
lowed some mild purgation or laxative,
should be given. For this purpose, calomel,
castor oil, & the sulphate of magnesia or
epsom salts, have been employed, but
calomel has been found, from its pecu-
liar operation, in inflamed intestines
and stomach to be by far the most
superior to all others.

The sulphate of magnesia or epsom
salt is also very highly recommended in
such cases, together with its laxative effect,
it has that of allaying gastric distress,
from the authority of Dr. Chapman, in
his invaluable work on Therapeutics and
Materia Medica, and which, I have had
an opportunity of seeing verified to an
entire coincidence.



To remove the stentor, from the
movement of the attack, should be attempted,
but at this stage of the disease we will
more likely succeed with those remedies,
which are more particularly given for
that purpose, than to use Liniment
and milk, immediately mentioned &c, after
the use of those more general and bene-
ficial remedies, the effects of which, tend
as well to remove inflammation, as to calm
irritability.

I find also at this stage of the disease,
when the secret are relaxed of it, are much
strengthened, by the use of the previous reme-
dies and more under the influence and
control of those of a more active nature, and
calculated to equalize and diffuse the ex-
crement over the whole system, thereby
determining in a measure the action
from those parts, which are disordered.
smoothly



onably excited (as in this case, the stomachs,
the sympathies are called into requisition;
but owing, (as I have before mentioned, to
the irritabile state of the stomachs, they
cannot be taken internally; and those on-
ly, which act externally, are to be employ-
ed; and the best of these is the warm bath,
it not only gives to the disease a ventri-
fugal character, but produces perspiration
in and calms the irritation.

Notwithstanding, however, the most
prompt and vigorous treatment in some
cases, from the violence of the inflammation,
gangrene will supervene, indicated
by a sudden remission of the pain, while
the frequency of the pulse continues, and as
the same time becomes weaker, attended
with loco delirium, and a distension of
the abdomen with wind, together with
erectum.

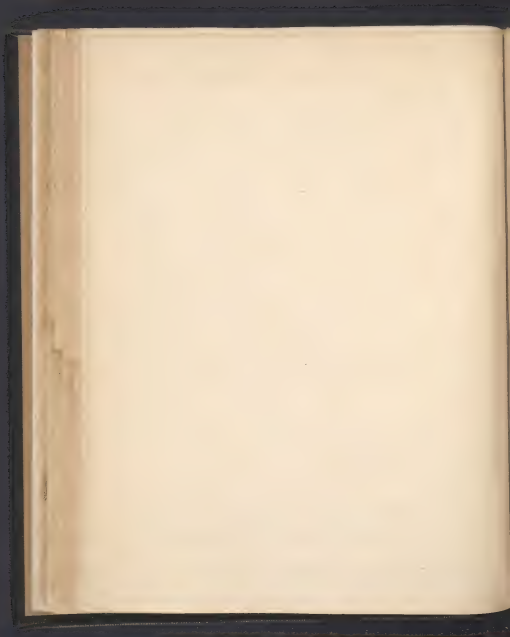


symptom of increasing debility, in the
whole system.

This is certainly an alarming and
almost hopeless situation, and human-
ity as well as the honour and credit of
the profession ought to be sufficient incite-
ments, to induce him to restore his over-
laid in withering health, so long as there
was to the smallest vestige of vitality re-
maining. For this purpose, and in pre-
cisely this situation, is offered of the utmost
importance, and has been found to be of the
greatest utility in this stage of the disease.

The use of hyposulphuric Acid also has been used
with the same view and under similar
circumstances, with the opinion, to check
the progress of gangrene.

The last remedial measure, to elude
gangrene in this disease, is a copious use

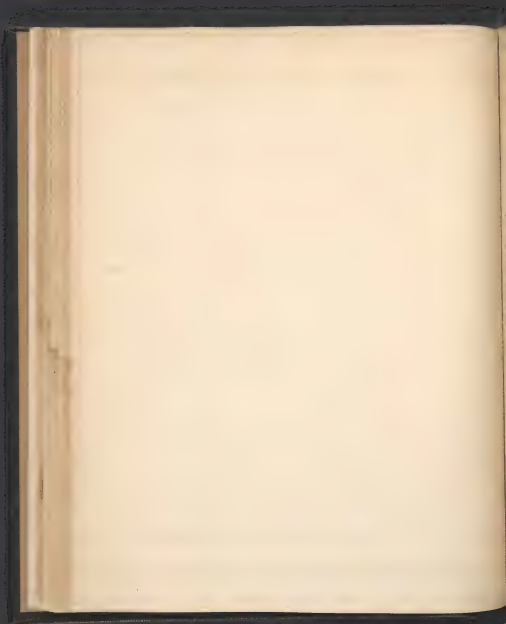


of the throat, and a few rows of blisters in
the circumference of the uterus.

Such is the treatment of the com-
mon forms of this disease.

When it is produced by any acid
or poisonous substance taken into the
stomach, an immediate attempt should
be made to reject it, by the most cer-
tain means, such as large doses of tart-
arized Antimony and Spicacaulha com-
bined, sulphate of zinc &c. And if the
nature of the offending matter be known,
such specific emetics or antidotes, as
have been recommended and found most
efficacious should be resorted to.

In some cases however, notwithstand-
ing these efforts to expell or correct the
offending substance, fever and delirium
attend



ation to the brain will occasion difficult
cath. respiration).

The treatment in such cases,
is similar, to the treatment of those pro-
duced from other causes, with this excep-
tion however, that, when these effects are
produced from any of the narcotic poisons,
they will not be susceptible to any great
extent, and require cordial remedies after
its use.

There is also another exception to
the general treatment of affections aris-
ing from all acids or poisons, that,
when they arise from digitalis and its
kindred articles, they require the most
diffusible stimulants, such as the spirit-
uous liquors, Volatile Alkali &c, and even
opium itself has been found very service-
able.

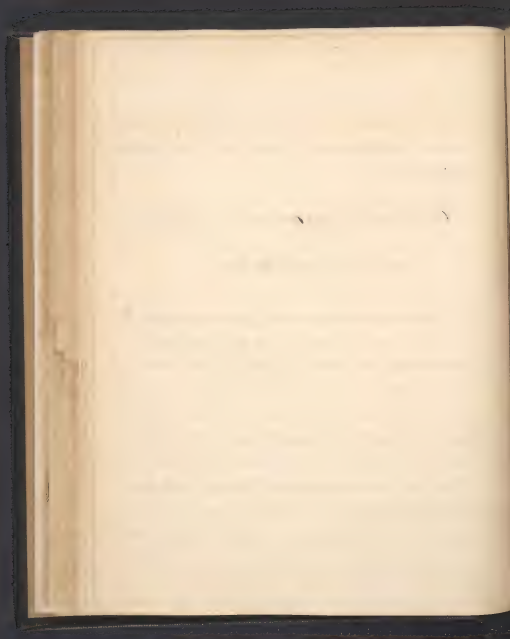


Having spoken of the first species of Gastritis, or phlegmonous gastritis, I shall now speak of the second species or erythematic gastritis.

Of Erythematic Gastritis.

The Symptoms.

These are not generally well defined, hence it is said to exist frequently without detection, as from dissections, the stomach has been found to have the appearance of mucous inflammation, unaccompanied with any marked symptoms of the phlegmonous or erythematic kind. But however there are some cases that may be detected, by the inflammation extending to the Oesophagus, Pharynx and sometimes to the



the whole internal surface of the vessels, to-
gether with at the same time an unusual
degree of sensibility in the stomach, to any
acid substance taken into it, amount of pe-
tule, anxiety, sometimes occasional vom-
iting, constant thirst and frequency of pulse.

It seems to be the nature of this kind
of inflammation to spread, from one part
to another of the same surface, leaving the
part in which it was first seated and attack-
ing another, thus extending along the whole
course of the alimentary Canal, success-
ively, occasioning alternations of diarrhoea
and vomiting.

of the bowels.

Many of the causes which produce the
phlegmous gastritis, also produce this; such
as acid or poisonous substances taken into
the



the stomach; some of the causes which produce erythema of the skin, such as luxuriant living and an abuse of fermented liquors, also malignant fevers produce it.

Treatment.

The treatment is varied according to the causes and symptoms.

If occasioned by acrid or poisonous substances taken into the stomach, which sometimes occasion the phlegmoseous kind, the same means are requisite for this affection, that were accompanied, when speaking of the treatment of that particular kind; and if attended with a sense of heat, pain and pyrexia, in proportion to the violence of these symptoms, are those remedies to be employed, that are used for
the

the cure of the first species of this disease.

When this disease arises from any malignant fern, if pain and pyrexia accompany it, bleeding will be found necessary, and these means accompanied in the first species, when not too much debilitated from other causes; but as this disease more commonly occurs in convalescents from fern, bleeding will be found inadvisable, and all that can be done, is to avoid irritation as much as possible. —

